

In my district back in 2000, tens of thousands of ballots were thrown out, spit out by faulty machines.

The Republicans stole the election back in 2000 and now we are at war.

It's time for the Republicans to talk the talk and walk the walk.

If they want war, give them a gun and make them go fight.

Those in the White House who have deferred 5 times and others over there who were called to duty yet never showed up . . . how dare they call Mr. MURTHA a coward!

JOHN MURTHA has been the most ardent supporter of our troops on the ground in Congress.

In his 37 years in the Marines, JOHN MURTHA won two Purple Hearts, a Bronze Star with Combat "V", and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He was awarded the Navy Distinguished Service Medal by the Marine Corps Commandant when he retired from the Marines.

JOHN MURTHA earned his bona fides to comment on what the troops are going through when he volunteered for duty in Vietnam.

And yes, Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for Congressman MURTHA but I will tell you straight out that I AM calling the President, and the others in the White House who have intentionally misled the Americans into this war liars.

They knew from the outset that there weren't any Weapons of Mass Destruction over there.

They knew from the outset that there was no connection between Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein.

But yet, Mr. Speaker, we went in there anyway.

And now over 2,000 of our brave soldiers have lost their lives; over 30,000 have suffered permanent injuries and their lives, or the lives of their loved ones will never be the same.

This war is a sham, it was a sham from the get go, and it is a sham today.

Now, I support the troops but I do not support the leaders of this Nation who led them into battle without enough equipment, and without any exit plan whatsoever.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO MEN'S SOCCER TEAM FOR ADVANCING TO THE COLLEGE CUP

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of New Mexico Men's Soccer Team for advancing to the College Cup for the first time in school history. Last Friday, in the fourth round of the NCAA Tournament the second seeded Lobos defeated seventh seeded California Bears 1-0 to advance to the College Cup in Cary, North Carolina.

These Lobo student athletes have proudly represented the UNM in classroom and on the field. Led by Head Coach Jeremy Fishbein the Lobos finished the season with a 15-1-2 finish and a No.1 ranking in the final NSCAA Top-25 and Soccer Times Top-25 poll.

Mr. Speaker, this team is packed with home grown talent. A total of nine players are from New Mexico including seven from my district in Albuquerque. In fact, Mr. Speaker, three Albuquerque Public High School graduates combined for the winning overtime goal against California. Eldorado Eagle Brandon Moss passed down the field to Sandia Matador Ben Ashwil who chipped to La Cueva Bear Jeff Rowland who buried the ball in the net for the winning goal.

I would also like to congratulate UNM seniors Jeff Rowland and Lance Watson for being two of only 54 collegiate soccer players who received invitations to the 2006 Adidas MLS Player Combine, a pre-draft Major League Soccer camp. In addition, Jeff Rowland, a non recruited walk on who maintains over a 3.7 cumulative g.p.a. is a candidate for the Herman Trophy, awarded annually to the top player in college soccer.

Players and fans alike often have strange superstitions to ward off bad luck. For example, Mr. Speaker, former baseball player Wade Boggs would eat only chicken the day of a game. Many Lobo players their fans and family have kicked it up a notch by growing moustaches.

I am eagerly anticipating the Lobos College Cup Semifinals game against Clemson, tomorrow, December 9, 2005, as these Lobo athletes proudly represent the University of New Mexico on the national stage.

Mr. Speaker, In closing, I wish to commend the UNM Men's Soccer Team, UNM Head Coach Jeremy Fishbein, UNM athletic director Rudy Davalos, and all the dedicated Lobo fans for this successful season. Go Lobos.

TRIBUTE TO H. WALKER FEASTER III

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to H. Walker Feaster III, Inspector General of the Federal Communications Commission, who retired on January 3, 2006, after 38 years of Federal service—32 of which were served at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Walker attended Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration in 1966. Walker's distinguished career began with service in the U.S. Navy from August 1966 to August 1971. Walker served as Combat Information Center Officer/Intelligence Officer on a guided missile frigate and was deployed to the Middle East on the flagship for the Commander, Middle East Forces. Walker also served as Staff Assistant to the Deputy Commander for Plans, Naval Telecommunications Command. Walker was discharged from active duty with the rank of Lieutenant and ultimately retired from the U.S. Naval Reserve with the rank of Commander in 1992.

In October 1971, Walker went back to work for the Naval Telecommunications Service as a civilian employee and in January 1974, after a brief career in the private sector, Walker joined the FCC as a Senior Analyst and later Deputy Chief of the Management Systems Division within the Office of Managing Director.

During this period, Walker also found time to earn a Master of Science in Government from Southern Illinois University in 1975 and earn a Master of Business Administration from American University in 1977. In 1978, Walker joined the staff of the FCC's Private Radio Bureau first as the Assistant Bureau Chief for Management and later as the Associate Bureau Chief for Operations. In 1981, he rejoined the Office of Managing Director as the Deputy Chief of Management Planning and later became the Associate Managing Director for Program Analysis.

Walker was named as the Acting Inspector General of the FCC on November 14, 1994, and, on April 14, 1996, was officially appointed as the Inspector General, the position he held until his retirement. Walker had many accomplishments as the FCC's Inspector General. Directing a staff of 14 professionals, he expanded oversight of Commission operations and improved the objectivity and integrity of audits and investigations. During his tenure, he directed over 167 audits/surveys/special reports of Commission operations and programs making over 600 recommendations or observations and achieving Commission concurrence for over 95 percent of those findings. He also directed over 270 inquiries/investigations of Commission employees and contractors and assisted Federal prosecutors in criminal investigations and prosecutions resulting in plea agreements, criminal fines, civil settlements and restitutions. Walker prepared Semi-Annual Reports to Congress on office activities and testified before House and Senate committees on numerous occasions.

Walker and his wife Susan have two children, Nicole and Nicholas. Susan Smith Feaster is the President of Coastal Partners, Ltd., and CEO and Chairman of the Board for the World Leadership Institute. Susan also formerly served on the staffs of United States Senator Paul Trible, Jr. and Congressman Frank R. Wolf. Nicole, a sixth grader who speaks French fluently, is an outstanding student and athlete. She participates in Tai Kwon Do, basketball and softball. Nicholas, a bright little 3 year old, attends preschool in Georgetown, and is busy learning the alphabet and his numbers in French. The Feaster family enjoys attending sporting events together and vacations to destinations in the United States and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending the career of H. Walker Feaster III. With Walker's retirement, the FCC loses an enthusiastic, innovative leader and an exemplary Federal employee.

RECOGNITION OF THE SKYHAWKS, NCAA DIVISION II MEN'S SOCCER CHAMPIONS

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Skyhawks, Fort Lewis College's Men's Soccer team for winning the 2005-2006 NCAA Division II National Championship. Being undefeated, ranked first in the nation, and then winning the National Championship is indeed a dream season for this phenomenal group of athletes.

The Skyhawks 3–1 victory on December 4th capped an undefeated season with Fort Lewis winning 22 matches. In the Final Four Tournament, Team Captain Bryan Eisenbraun was named most valuable defensive player. John Cunliffe was named most valuable offensive player. These two young men and two other Skyhawks—Nick Clark and Cole Sweetser—were also named All-American soccer players.

The Fort Lewis Skyhawks are the pride of the entire community. These men are positive role models for the younger generation, not only for their talent and dedication to the sport, but because of their dedication to volunteering and giving back to the community. For several years, the coaches and team have been actively involved with the Durango Youth Soccer Association, leading soccer camps, coaching clinics, and hosting club soccer tournaments. The Skyhawk men have taken the time to be mentors for Durango youth and have become like family for many people.

The Skyhawks are a shining example of the values important to all Coloradans—hard work, dedication, leadership, and working with the community. To Fort Lewis College President Brad Bartels, Coach Jeremy Gunn, Assistant Coaches Darren Morgan, Andy McDermid, James Hall and all the members of the Skyhawk's 2005 men's soccer team: Adam Beach, Jonathan Boyer, Nick Clark, Bernardo Costa, John Cunliffe, Tom Donley, John Eckhoff, Bryan Eisenbraun, Fabian Ferrada, Sean Flanagan, Kyle Fredrick, Ben Gatenbein, Kieran Hall, Ryan Kerr, Nick Kirchhof, Taylor Lavoy, Ryan Parsons, Carter Rice, Casey Roberts, Paul Sanchez, Cole Sweetser, Justin Valashinas, Cliff Wilmes, and Kenny Wood—congratulations on your victory and thank you for your service to the community.

INTRODUCING THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY RESTORATION ACT

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, today I, together with Subcommittee Ranking Democratic Member Norton, and 30 other Democratic Members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (the Committee), have introduced the "Federal Emergency Management Agency Restoration Act of 2005". This bill will reestablish the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as an independent, cabinet-level agency. It will further strengthen the agency by ensuring that the FEMA Director is chosen from among qualified candidates who have extensive experience in the areas of emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation for all hazards. This bill will begin the process of restoring FEMA to a level of competence that the American people expect and deserve.

Moving FEMA into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was the wrong thing to do. It trapped the agency—an agency that needs to be nimble and be able to marshal resources quickly—in a bureaucratic morass. During its time in DHS, FEMA has been par-

tially dismantled, been bled of necessary resources, been unable to fill key management positions on a permanent basis, been unable to make timely decisions to deal with emergencies, and has been forced to focus on terrorism at the expense of natural disasters. FEMA's response to the natural disaster of Hurricane Katrina was itself a disaster.

Although I am saddened by FEMA's current troubles, I am not surprised. Three years ago, during consideration of H.R. 5005, the Homeland Security Act of 2002, I offered an amendment to keep FEMA independent from the Department of Homeland Security. I, along with many other Democrats, feared that including FEMA in the new Department would undermine its effectiveness by diverting resources away from its traditional mission of preparing for and responding to natural disasters, thereby leaving the federal government unprepared to respond to a disaster like Hurricane Katrina.

Further in testimony before the Select Committee on Homeland Security in July 2002, in response to a question by Select Committee Member Congresswoman DeLauro, I set forth what I believed to be the dangers of moving FEMA to the newly-created Department.

Congressman DeLauro: Let me ask a question with regard to FEMA. You've recommended keeping FEMA as a separate agency but would coordinate with a DHS in the event of a terrorist attack. How do you think that moving FEMA into the Department of Homeland Security would affect our ability to respond to hurricanes, other natural disasters, and how do you envision the FEMA-DHS coordination being carried out?

Congressman Oberstar: FEMA started out as the civil defense agency. . . . And then moved into, as the Cold War wound down, assuming broader responsibilities as our nation's premier disasters assistance and response agency. *To move it into this new Department of Homeland Security without a clearly defined homeland security role is, my judgment, a mistake. We have not seen a delineation of what is homeland security compared to response to floods, hurricanes, blizzards, earthquakes, tornadoes. You know, when your home is underwater up to the eaves are you going to wonder, where is FEMA? Are they on some mission looking for terrorists or are they going to be on a mission looking for your lost children and rescuing you from the rooftop of your home?* [emphasis added].

The bill I introduce today will help FEMA get back on track. By establishing FEMA as a cabinet-level independent agency in the executive branch, the bill ensures that FEMA is not trapped in a massive department in which the Director of FEMA must work through levels of bureaucracy before taking appropriate action.

In Committee hearings held in October 2005, emergency management officials from across the Nation testified that they believed FEMA needs to be moved out of DHS in order for it to function effectively. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee plans additional hearings early next year to discuss the direction of FEMA and how to improve our preparedness and response to major disasters. I hope that Secretary Chertoff, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, will respond favorably to the Committee's request to testify at one of these hearings.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this bill will begin the process of restoring FEMA as a first-class agency able to prepare for, respond to, and recover from both natural and man-made dis-

asters. On September 6, 2005, when Congress returned from the August recess, Congresswoman NORTON, the Ranking Democratic Member of the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, and I introduced H.R. 3659, a bill to move FEMA out of the Department of Homeland Security and reestablish its independence. This bill builds upon H.R. 3659 by strengthening the qualifications for the FEMA Director and establishing the position of Deputy Director, who is to serve as a liaison to the Department of Homeland Security in the event of an act of terrorism, and act for the Director when the Director is absent, unable to serve, or when the position of the Director is vacant. The bill also includes those provisions to provide for the transfer of personnel and appropriations which are necessary to establish a separate, independent agency. A section by section explanation of the bill is set forth below.

I urge Congress to consider this legislation early in the coming year.

SECTION-BY-SECTION OF THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY RESTORATION ACT

Section 1. Short Title. This section establishes the short title for the Federal Emergency Management Agency Restoration Act.

Section 2. Federal Emergency Management Agency. This section establishes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a cabinet-level independent agency in the executive branch. The section sets forth that FEMA is responsible for emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation for all hazards, including major disasters, acts of terrorism, and other emergencies. For purposes of the Act, "emergency preparedness" does not include law enforcement efforts to prevent or deter terrorism, protect critical infrastructure, and conduct intelligence activities.

The section establishes qualifications for the FEMA Director. It states that the Director of FEMA shall be appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among persons who have extensive experience in emergency preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation for all hazards, including major disasters, acts of terrorism, and other emergencies. The section also prescribes a five-year term of office for the Director.

The section establishes a Deputy Director, appointed from the competitive service, and sets for the criteria for the Deputy Director. The section also sets forth the duties of the Deputy Director and authorizes the Deputy Director to serve as a liaison to the Department of Homeland Security in the event of an act of terrorism, and to act for the Director when the Director is absent, unable to serve, or when the position of the Director is vacant.

Section 3. Transfer of Functions. This section sets forth the functions and personnel to be transferred to an independent FEMA. The section also provides for the transfer of FEMA within 120 days of the date of enactment.

Section 4. Savings Provisions. This section sets forth various technical provisions to establish an independent FEMA with the authorities necessary to function as an independent agency and provides for the transfer of personnel and appropriations.